

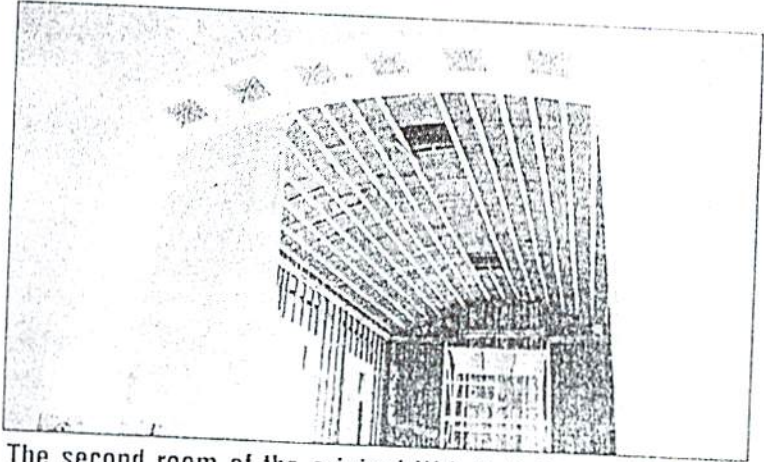
## Historical Restoration Yields Construction Lessons

By MORAG MACLACHLAN

Tom Daley admits that the Wright Building project is not only one the largest building projects he's undertaken as the town's DPW director, but also one of the most intriguing.

"My main focus is quality and cost control, but I am learning a lot about historical renovations," Daley said.

The building, constructed in 1907, was built by Georgiana Wright as a memorial to her family and to provide the town with a library, according to Patrick Browne, executive director of the Duxbury Rural & Historical Society. Browne said the building was built with Georgiana Wright's son, George, specifically in mind since he had been killed in an accident.



The second room of the original Wright Building will house the historical society's archives. The entrance to the room will be separated from the hallway with a huge pane of glass to facilitate a climate controlled setting in the room for the preservation of the archives.

Nancy Bennett of the historical commission and the Friends of the Bluefish River Fire House said originally the town's first fire house sat on the St. George Street property, but the Wright family had that structure moved to its current location on Washington Street by the Bluefish River to construct the library on the land across the street from what was then the Wright family's home. Browne said the Wright family's estate called Pine Hill is now the parcel that Duxbury High School occupies.

An addition to the Wright Building was constructed in 1967 to expand the library, according to Browne. Daley said the Magic Dragon Children's Center also occupied the Wright Building addition at one time. The center is now housed at the Chandler School. The old high school building became the Duxbury Free Library in 1997. Once the restoration of the Wright Building is complete, the Duxbury Rural & Historical Society will lease the original 1907 portion of the Wright Building and the Duxbury Student Union will lease the back half of the building or the 1967 addition. The town owns the Wright Building.

From Daley's point of view, going through the 1907 building and the 1967 addition to try and bring both portions up to the 21st century, but at the same time restore and preserve the

entire building's character has turned into somewhat of a historical investigation. Daley said a photo taken back in December before work on the reading room of the original library was worked on showed sconces on each side of the fireplace and chandeliers hanging from the ceiling. Daley and the project's architects believed these lighting fixtures were historic and made of bronze. Upon taking them out of the room to be restored, Daley said the fixtures turned out to be made of wood, which proves how tricky it can be to restore a historical building.

With the scones and chandeliers permanently removed since the pieces were not authentic, Daley said cove lighting and desk lamps will be used to illuminate the room.

Another phony find was the dental work or the wooden trim that was found in the room. It was determined to be from the 1970s and not 1907. Daley said he and his crews were able to determine this date because the wood had a stamp on it and these stamps were not featured on lumber until the 1970s.

The fireplace in the room was painted white. Daley said underneath this paint is gold leaf and marble. This piece will be restored to allow visitors to appreciate these original and much more eye-pleasing materials. The clock that was hung over the fireplace in the room did turn out to be authentic. Daley said that piece was being restored and would be returned to the room in its original location.

The room across from the

reading room will be used to house the historical society's archives. Daley said this room is made of brick walls and will be reinforced with insulation to reduce energy costs and to yield a climate conducive to preserving the archives. Instead of installing storm windows or using a bar to reinforce the original windows, Daley said state-of-the-art thermo pane glass windows will be installed.

"These windows will help protect the archives and won't be as much of an eye sore. They look similar to the original windows, so they are historically accurate, but much more eye friendly," Daley said.

The room will also be climate controlled because the entrance that faces the rotunda to connect the archive room to the reading room will be separated by a huge pane of glass. Daley said this will create a humidity controlled vapor barrier.

Two elevators will be installed in the building to make the building handicap accessible. Instead, the entrance on the right side of the building will become the main entrance to access both sides of the structure.

Since crews met with a lot of water damage in the building's basement, Daley said a black material was being painted on the foundation and another form of insulation was then being attached to the foundation to make doubly sure water will not be an issue at the structure.

"They are very good to work with," Daley said. "It's not an easy project. It's challenging, but I do enjoy the historical aspect."